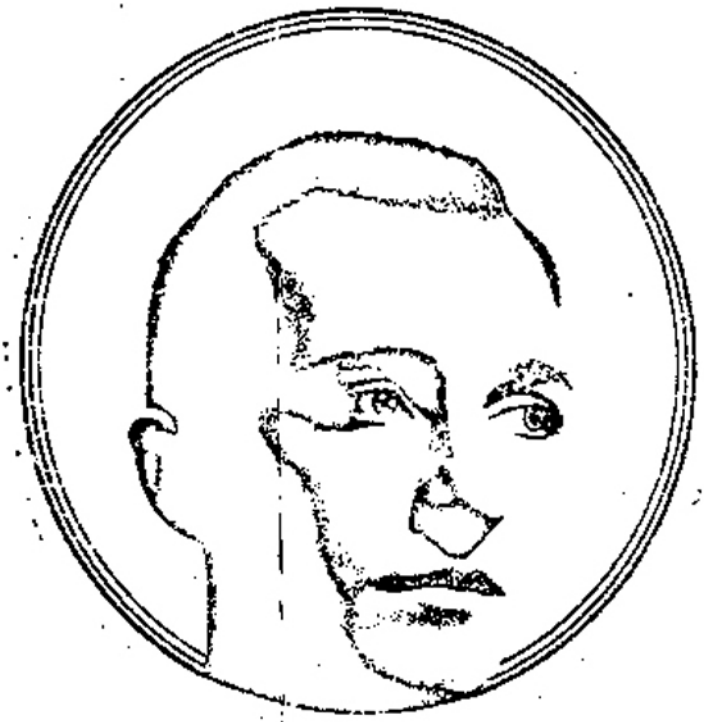


the Victorian Bing Crosby Society

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 7th 1978

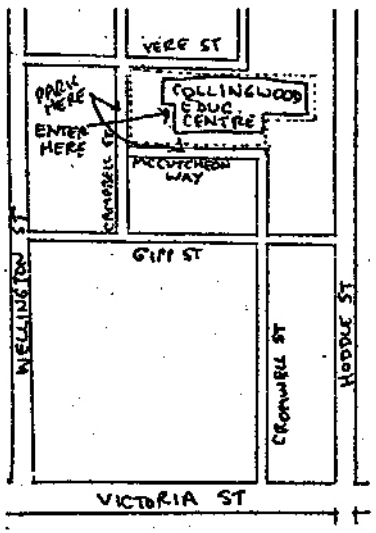
Hello again,

Here we are again, this time with our third major newsletter for 1978. I hope you find the contents interesting, particularly the news relating to the latest LP issues and re-issues. I'd like to thank all those members who wrote in to say how much they liked the new format for our newsletter, especially the reprinting of articles from other sources. Although we aren't in the business of producing a Crosby magazine in competition with those produced in the US and UK, wherever possible, we would like to bring you items of interest relating to the local scene or that might not normally appear in the above-mentioned publications. Also, later in this issue, we'll be printing extracts from a couple of interesting letters received from members recently. One change you'll notice with this newsletter is the printing of future functions on Page 1, this being in response to a number of requests received. Also in reponse to your requests, major subheads will be printed in bold type. As follows.

FUTURE FUNCTIONS

Film Afternoon - Sunday June 18th 1.30 pm - 6.00 pm

Before the big 'King of Jazz' screening, we have decided to slot in another film afternoon at the Collingwood Education Centre, McCutcheon Way, Collingwood. (See map) The film to be screened is not as rare as perhaps our last couple of offerings, but nonetheless, it is an important milestone in the Crosby career. It is "Road to Singapore", the first of the justly famous "road" series featuring Bing and Bob Hope. We have set the starting time at 1.30. Actually, the afternoon will commence sharp at 2.00 pm, so please arrive between those two times. At our last film afternoon, we broke with tradition and showed a couple of non-Bing shorts in the first half of the programme.



These were so well received that we have decided to repeat the practice with our next screening as well. Although final details have yet to be decided, one of the shorts will almost certainly be a 1935 film entitled "Calling all Girls" , which, from the publicity blurb, purports to show how girls are recruited for the Busby Berkeley musicals. Another highlight of the afternoon will be the raffling of a copy of the recent book "The films of Bing Crosby". More details of that a little later in this newsletter.

Music evening - Monday July 3rd. 7.30 p.m. - 10.30 p.m.

Coming up on July 3rd is the third of our music evenings for 1978. (A report of our last evening appears later.) Guest speakers on this occasion will be Bill Bennett. Kevin Sheather and Les Saynor. Each will speak on a different facet of Bing's career and back their talk with unusual and interesting musical items. Once again, a musical quiz will be held during the course of the evening with LP record prizes going to the successful entrants. Supper will be served at interval. Venue is, as before, the North Balwyn RSL, located in Centreway, off Doncaster Road, just before Trentwood Avenue. Look for the bowling green in front of the RSL.
We realize that this location is a little difficult for some of our members to get to. Unfortunately, we have none better at the moment. If you know of any venue that meets our requirements (i.e. adequate seating facilities, parking, kitchen, low cost) please do let us know. Ideally, somewhere in the South Melbourne area is required, this being more or less central to our widely spread membership.

KING OF JAZZ KING OF JAZZ KING OF JAZZ

You will be delighted to know that we have actually set the date for the screening of King of Jazz. In fact, there are two dates, as we have decided to make the screening open to the general public. These will be Tuesday August 1st and Monday August 7th. Venue will be the Camberwell Civic Centre. In a few weeks, you will receive more details of this exciting event. In the meantime, please mark one)or both) of these dates in your diary.

* Entrance fees for "Road to Singapore", omitted above, will be: Pensioners: $1, Adult: $2, Husband & Wife: $3, Families: $4.

PAST FUNCTIONS

Monday May 1st - Musical Evening

Despite the fact that it was a rather cold and gloomy evening, over thirty members turned out to our second musical evening for the year, and they were not disappointed. Speakers for the evening were Adrian Fowler (alternate 'takes'), Les Saynor (Bing's early film soundtracks)and Thelma Wood (music quiz). In the last mentioned, Thelma played the opening bars to a number of well-known Crosby records and asked the audience to identify the songs from the music. Of all the "experts" present, only ONE member, (whose name, embarassingly, escapes me for the moment) was able to name every title correctly. For shame, for shame!

BOOK RAFFLE

As mentioned earlier, we have obtained a copy of the excellent new book by Robert Bookbinder, "The Films of Bing Crosby". A hard cover publication with over 250 pages, it is packed with details of all of Bing's films from his first to his last and illustrated with hundreds of rare photographs from the period. A first rate publication, it deserves to be in every Crosby collection. Although not released officially in Australia, a few copies have found their way to bookshops around town where they sell for the outrageous price of $22! Outrageous indeed, for the same book retails in the US for $14.95 and for even less through the book clubs there. Taking into account the difference between Australian and US currency, and you realize just how much extra we have to pay here!

Anyway, we have obtained a copy of this book and will be raffling it to members at the next films afternoon (June 18th). Tickets in the raffle will be $1.00 each, and the raffle will be drawn at interval. If by some chance you would like to participate in the raffle but cannot be present on the day, simply send one dollar to our postal address, P.O. Box 422, South Melbourne, 3205, to arrive no later than Friday June 16th.

N.B. Due to the poor response to the mirror raffle announced at our last afternoon, we have relectantly decided to cancel this particular function, due to the fact that we wouldn't have even

recovered the purchase price of the mirror! If you are one of those who purchased a ticket in the raffle, your money will be refunded at the next meeting. Alternativly, if you would like to transfer your ticket to the book raffle, we will happily do this for you.

NEW RECORDS

Another exciting list of issues and reissues, both here and abroad. In response to many requests for details of where to write for records in the U.K. and U.S., I am happy to publish the following addresses. Please note that dealers will supply you with lists of what they currently have available; however, they will not undertake to send you listings of new material as it is issued. Payment is easiest made via bank draft which your local bank can easily arrange for you.

For US releases, the people that I have always found reliable are Rare Records, P.O. Box 10518, Glendale, California, 91209 USA. (A copy of their latest list appears below). Rare Records also conduct a record auction featuring both LP's and 78's. Ask for detail ls when you write.

For UK releases, write to Dave Carey's Swing Shop, 1-b Mitcham Lane, Streatham, London SW 16, England.

And now, as promised, that list from Rare Records:

Bing and Al 1944	Totem 1007
Bing and Al 1947	Totem 1003
Bing Is Back 1947	Totem 1002
Bing, Bob, and Judy	Totem 1009
Bing and Al 1950	Totem 1013
Bing and Al 1947	Totem 1015
Bing and Al 1950	Totem 1016
Bing and Al 1948	Totem 1017
On The Air, Vol. 2	Totem 1022
Command Performance USA	Tulip 108
Lux Radio Theatre	Totem 1004
Mr. Crosby & Mr. Mercer	MCA 8025
Shillelagha & Shamrocks	MCA 177
When Irish Eyes Are Smiling	MCA 519
The Best Of Bing	MCA 2 4045
Rare Early Recordings 1928-1933	Bio. C 13
Star Spangled Rhythm	CC 100/20
The Great Country Hits	EMI Capitol 1004
Bing In The Thirties	Spokane 12
Bing/Harry Lillis Crosby	Col. Spec. Prod. 14369
Kraft Music Hall (1-29-42)	Spokane 11
Where The Blue of the Night Meets The Gold Of The Day	Biograph BLP M1
Greatest Hits	MCA 3031
Bing & Co. (wi: C. Boswell, Dixie Lee Crosby, Judy Garland, Al Jolson, others)	MCA 2775
On The Air	Spokane 1
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 2
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 3
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 5
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 6
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 7
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 8
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 9
Kraft Music Hall	Spokane 10
Der Bingle	CPL 1 2088
Happy Holiday with...	Lon 679
Kraft Music Hall	Columbia C2L 43
Sing You Sinners	MGM Select 2353 101
Birth Of The Blues	Variation VLP 1
Der Bingle, Vol. 2	Coral CPS 114
Legendary Performer	UA LA 554 G
Bing, Feelin Good, Feels Right	Jazum 10
Bing Crosby In Hollywood 1930-1934(2 rec)	UA LA 568 G
Special Magic Of Bing Crosby	MCA MCFM 2721
Many Happy Returns	Columbia CE2E 201
Bing Crosby & The Andrews Sisters	
That's What Life Is All About	MFP 50249
Bing Crosby	Capitol SM 11736
Bing Crosby & Fred Astaire	Capitol SM 11737
Bing Sings the Great Songs	Capitol SM 11735
The Bing Crosby Story (2 rec)	Capitol SM 11738
Where The Blues Of The Night Meet The Gold Of The Day	Capitol SM 11739
That Travelin' Two-Beat	Capitol SM 11740
Sings The Great Country Hits	Sunbeam 502
Bing Crosby-Louis Armstrong	Sunbeam 504
Crosby Classics, Vol. 1	
Crosby Classics, Vol. 2	
Crosby Classics, Vol. 3	
Distinctively Bing	
Distinctively Bing, Vol. 2	

* Late addition: Conversations in Hollywood, Citadel CP 6029. Available from Citadel Records, PO Box 1662, Burbank, California 91701, USA.

Several of those records are worth further comment.
Bing Crosby in Hollywood (1930 - 34) Columbia C2L 43 has long been sought after by collectors who missed it on the first release here about 10 years ago. It features the commercial records of virtually every song sung by Bing in his 1930 - 34 movies, beginning with King of Jazz. Well worth having.

Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day, Biograph BLP M1 (Not to be confused with the Vocalian/MFP issue of the same name) is an absolute must for anyone who likes Bing's early work. It features the actual soundtrack songs from Bing's 6 1931 Mack Sennett comedies, many of which he never recorded commercially. A bonus is Bing's one and only song from the 1931 Douglas Fairbanks Snr film, "Reaching for the Moon". It's title: "High Up, Low Down".

Crosby Classics, Vols 1,2 & 3 (Capitol SM 11738, 39 & 40) is a collection of titles from Bing's four singalong LP's from the late 50's, early 60's. Not my favourite period, but worth having if you want everything of Bing's. The original issues have been long out of print and are very hard to obtain.

Distinctively Bing, Vols 1 & 2 (Sunbeam 502 & 504) Despite a little surface noise, these two sets are worth having. They feature vocals from the late 20's, early 30's, not previously issued on LP.

From the latest issue of "Bing", the magazine of the International Crosby Circle in the UK, comes news of a SIX LP SET of Bing's Columbia issues. This features many of the tracks from 'Bing Crosby in Hollywood' (but not all) and also from "The Bing Crosby Story, Vol 1 - the early jazz years" + a number of others not contained on those 4 lp's. The title of the set is Bing Crosby - Golden Memories and is available on the CBS Special Products Label, either on 6lp's, 3 cassettes, or anunstated number of 8-track tapes. The set is available from: Vanowen Industries, Dept BC1, 10635 Vanowen St, Burbank, California, 91505 USA. I imagine that it is also available from Rare Records. Price listed in "Bing" is about US $20.00, but it would be wise to write first to acertain postage costs to Australia.

Other issues of interest overseas include:

Joe Bushkin Celebrates 100 years of Recorded Sound, United Artists, UAG 30142. This LP, available only in England at present, contains Bing's last two recorded solos, put down just ten days before his passing: "Now you has jazz" and "Sail Away from Norway".

"So Long Bing", a single by J.J. Barrie (?) available once again only in England on EMI 45, Cat. No. 2727. Quite tasteful and well done. Although it is obviously taking advantage of the situation, this disc makes pleasant listening and is worth having in your collection.

Rumors Rumors Rumors: Just to whet your appetite for things to come, here are some unconfirmed rumors of forthcoming reissues. It appears that MCA in the UK could be issueing one 20 track LP every month from their enormous stock of Crosby material, and each LP will include at least three tracks previously not reissued on LP.
On top of that good news comes another rumor that RCA are investigating the possibilty of taking a selection of the 200+ tracks recorded in the 1950's by Bing with the Buddy Cole Trio for radio broadcast, . . adding a modern orchestral backing to fill them out, and releasing them on a series of LP's. Keep your fingers crossed.

Poetry reading: Did you know that after he completed the 'Seasons' LP, Bing recorded several poems at the end of the session and these could be issued on a forthcoming memorial LP on United Artists? For interest, the titles of the poems are: Around the Corner, The Singers, If, Lucy Gray and finally, The Slaves Dream.

On the local scene, there have been a number of re-issues in recent times which you may find of interest.
These include "That Travelling Two Beat" featuring Bing and Rosemary Clooney and recorded in 1955, "Bing Sings the Great Songs", a collection of tracks from the mid-30's to the late-40's, "The Best of Bing", a collection of best selling Crosby discs - each which seem to have been reissued more times than they have sold copies (and that's saying something!)

On the positive side, it seems that CBS have slated for release shortly, one of the two albums mentioned in our last newsletter featuring early Columbia material not previously reissued on LP. Watch for it at your record shop.

Collins Book Basement Speaking of record shops, one of the most unusual would have to be Collins Book Basement in Elizabeth Street, city. As well as promoting discount books, the basement management also import records from the US, and the reason for this mention is that they have just received a new shipment that includes several items of interest to Crosby admirers. The most interesting of these is an LP on the Harmony label entitled "Great Moments from Old Time Radio". Compiled in the early 60's, this LP features a linking narration by an unidentified announcer together with a number of tracks taken mostly from 78's although there are one or two actual radio tracks featuring Will Rogers and W.C.Fields. The LP is of particular interest to us in that it features an alternate take of Bing's 1932 recording of "Sweet Georgia Brown" (stated as being recorded in 1929!). Also of interest on the LP are a track by Clayton, Jackson and Durante, Jimmy Durante's 1934 recording of 'Inka-Dinka-Do' and Kate Smith's 1931 recording of 'When the Moon comes over the mountain'.

Another set of interest is one entitled "3 hours, 59 minutes, 51 seconds...with the Marx Brothers" and featuring three tracks taken from radio broadcasts with Bing.

BING MEMORIAL

A gentleman named Ken Twiss, 6814 South G St., Tacoma, Washington 98408, has been dedicated for some years to the idea of achieving historical landmark status for Bing's birthplace in Tacoma. The latest report from Ken is that legal matters are proceeding well although there is still much work to be done regarding the incorporation of a 'Bing Crosby Birthplace Society'. These include a receipt of approval from the Crosby family, receipt of an option on purchase of the house from the present owners, and a receipt of a statement of intent from the Tacoma Public Library. Ken would be delighted to hear from you regarding suggestions for the memorial. Write to him direct at the above address.

LETTERS

From G. Pepperell, Elwood

Back in the early 30's I was living in Adelaide, aged around 16 - 17. In a Rundle Street Music Shop where we gathered at lunch time to listen to records for free (we knew the girl behind the counter), a new record had just arrived. The girl said that it was by Bing Crosby. We'd heard of him slightly, but had never heard him sing. The record, on Columbia, was called "There's a cabin in the pines". The price was 4 shillings, which, on my wage of 28 shillings per week was quite an item! From then on I became a collector - about one new record every month. Adelaide at that time was very much anti-Crosby. The records were never played on the radio except on one occasion, which drew a full page blast in the Adelaide Daily Mail warning people against this new menace from the USA. That finished the playing for some considerable time. In fact, when the first films came to town, white strips of paper were pasted over Crosby's name and picture, and similiar deletions were made in the newspaper advertisements for the film. I was criticized unmercifully by everyone over the age of 25 and about 95% ofthose under! However, I was proved correct in the long run and that's what counts.

(Ed note: Have you some story about the early days of Bing in Australia, or anytime for that matter, that you think might be of interest to other members? Send it in and we'll publish it in these pages.)

From Girvan Paterson, Oakleigh

I've always thought that the greatest memorial to Bing would be for him to always remain the biggest all time record seller. That way, most would have to concede that he is indeed the greatest of them all. However I was surprised (horrified would be a better word) to read in the latest newsletter that he was placed behind the Beatles and Elvis Presley! I hope they're wrong, but withthe amount of publicity Presley gets and with all his records on constant release they won't rest until he does pass Bing. I don't know what can be done about this, but I think the answer probably lies with the record companies. (Ed: And the record-buying public.)

A STYLUS FOR YOUR 78's

If you are a collector of 78's, you may be somewhat less than satisfied with the reproduction obtained from 78 styli available (when you can get them) these days. Your 78's may seem excessively noisy and certain of the older releases may seem to have an unusual 'swish' in the background. Well, don't blame your stylus too much, or even your modern hi-fi system. The problem lies in the fact that most new 78 styli are simply too narrow for the wide grooves of the records they are required to play. If this is your problem, there is a solution. There are, both overseas and in Australia companies that will actually re-tip your narrow stylus with a broader point more suited to 78 requirements. For this issue of the newsletter we will concern curselves with one Australian company, which, conveniently, is located right here in Melboure. The company is Garrott Brothers, 5 Bent Parade, Black Rock, 3193. Tel: 598 9913. While you wait, they will retip your existing style with a more suitable .3000" point. Overseas companies can provide you with still-broader points, but for the average 78 collector, you should notice an appreciable difference. I should point out that these replacement styli aren't cheap, probably around $20 including fitting. But it is worth the investment.

TWO MISSING CASSETTES

We seem to have lost track of two cassette from the cassette library, numbers 3 & 4 from the 'Bing Records' series. If you have these two cassettes, could you please return them as soon as possible as there are a number of members waiting to borrow them.

NEW ADDITIONS

I'm happy to announce four more additions to the library. These are:

Bing Records 20. Begin the Beguine (3.5.44) to Accentuate the Positive (8.12.44)

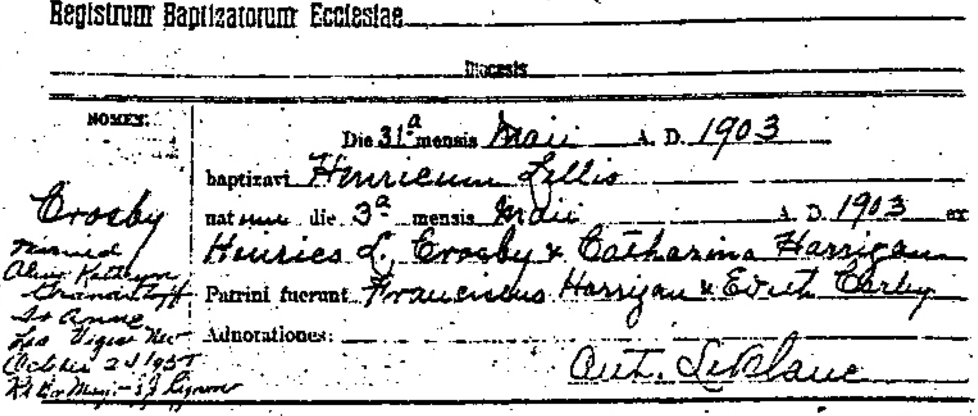
Bing Records 21. Road to Morocco (8.12.44) to It's been a long long time (12.7.45)

Bing Records 22. Whose dream are you (12.7.45) to Who threw the overalls in Mrs Murphy's chowder? (6.12.45)

Bing Records 23. It's the same old Shillelagh (6.12.45) to All by myself (18.7.46)

A-2 Tacoma, Sun., Oct. 16, 1977 The News Tribune

16 (Our thanks to Ken Twiss who supplied this important proof of Bing's true birthdate.)


Registrum Baptizatorum Ecclesiae

Diocesis

NOMEN:

Crosby

married Alice Kathryn Grandstaff St Anne Las Vegas Nev October 24 1957 Rt Rev Msgr - J J Lynn?

Die 31ª mensis Maii A. D. 1903

baptizavi Henricum Lillis

natum die 3ª mensis Maii A. D. 1903 ex

Henrico L. Crosby & Catharina Harrigan

Patrini fuerunt Franciscus Harrigan & Edith Corley

Adnotationes:

Ant. LeBlanc

Copy of Bing's baptismal certificate

Dispute over Crosby's correct birthdate settled

By JIM ERICKSON

TNT Staff Writer

Everyone was fooled about the birthdate of the late Bing Crosby, even the popular entertainer himself.

When he died of a heart attack Friday after completing a round of golf near Madrid, Spain, news stories reported the Tacoma-born entertainer's age as 73 — noting the birthdate as May 2, 1904. NBC, in a television special, reported Crosby was 76.

Magazine articles over the years have listed various dates, including 1901 and 1906.

Crosby attempted to set the record straight, stating in his autobiography that he was born May 30, 1904. Where he got it is anyone's guess. Maybe from the memories of relatives. Because when he tried to locate a copy of his birth certificate, he was unsuccessful.

"**WE WERE UNABLE** to find it," said Mrs. Vivian McNeill, chief deputy registrar of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's Division of Vital Statistics.

Why no one thought to examine official Roman Catholic Church records at St. Patrick Parish, 1122 N. J St., is a mystery. What was found in their records has got to be nearly as good as the word of God itself.

They indicate that Crosby was born in Tacoma on May 3, 1903 and baptized in the church on May 31, 1903. Thus, Crosby was 74 when he died.

THE HANDWRITTEN record in the now-weathered book shows the formalized Latin name for Harry, which was Bing's and his father's name. Bing's mother is listed by her maiden name. Godparents also are listed. On the far left is a notation of Crosby's second marriage to Kathryn Grandstaff.

The original entry was signed by The Rev. Anthony LeBlanc, parish priest in 1903.

Present parish priest, The Rev. Joseph Marquart, said he did not know why there was no inclusion of Crosby's first marriage in 1930 to Wilma Wyatt, known professionally as Dixie Lee.

"Sometimes that happens," said Father Marquart. "The parish where they were married is supposed to send us information. It didn't do it."

The clipping below concerns one of the many new books published recently on Bing. What makes it important to us, is that World Record Club in Melbourne have slated it for release in the near future. For more details, please contact the club direct.

OTHER CROSBY SOCIETIES: The American Club Crosby, membership: $6.50 p.a. Write: Pat Sullivan, 1301, Sheridan Ave, Apt 96, Chico, Cal. 95926. The International Crosby Circle, Membership: £ 2.00 p.a. Write: Reg Bristo, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Gwent, NP4 3NR. (N.B. The ICC will shortly be re-issuing their 'mini-discography' of all Bing's records. Join now!

Bing Pictorial (+ tapes exclusive). Write: Frank Murphy, 32 Ferndale Av Wallsend, Tyne & Wear, NE 28 7NE.

Records at 10% discount: to all members at the Bentleigh Sewing & Record Centre, 348 Centre Rd, Bentleigh.

For 78's, visit the Vintage Record Shop, 802 High St, Armadale. Tue & Thur 1 - 6pm Sat 10.00 - 12.00am

Next Edition of "The Crosby Collector" Sunday June 11th, 9.00 pm as part of Neville Wragg's popular programme Nostalgia Unlimited on 3CR. Topic to be covered is Bing's ability as a whistler. In fact, listen to Neville's whole show from 8.15 to midnight. It's a lot more entertaining than TV.

And that wraps it up for this edition of the newsletter. Please write and let us know if you enjoyed it and what other features we could incorporate in future.

Bob Mackin

The One and Only Bing

BOB THOMAS

280 x 210 mm – 152 pp
Black and white photographs throughout
Michael Joseph

$10.95 *(Recommended retail price $12.95)*

A recollection of the great moments in Crosby's career, and a tribute to the charm and integrity which characterised his private life. A chronicle of a remarkable career, and a portrait of Crosby the man.

Postage $1.25